

### **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Claims 20, 22-27, and 30-31 are pending in the present application. Claim 32 is cancelled. Claim 20 is amended by deleting "glutamic acid" from the Markush group of "the substance capable of reducing nitrite ions". No new matter is introduced in the present amendments. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to enter the present amendments and reconsider the present application based on the presently amended claims.

Claims 20, 22-24, and 26-27 were rejected as obvious over Mizukami (EP 0882 983 A2) in view of Janoff (U.S. Pat. 5,578,320) or Dickhardt (U.S. Pat. 5,245,008). As the Examiner acknowledged, Mizukami fails to disclose a substance capable of reducing nitrite ions as recited in the presently pending claims. Glutamic acid is removed from the present claims as a substance capable of reducing nitrite ions. Hence, neither does any of the secondary references cited by the Examiner, i.e., Janoff or Dickhardt, disclose or suggest any substance capable of reducing nitrite ions as recited in the presently pending claims. Therefore, the combination of the teachings of Mizukami, Janoff, and Dickhardt would not have led a person of ordinary skill to arrive at the presently claimed invention. Accordingly, the applicants believe that claims 20, 22-24, and 26-27 in the present amendments are not obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view of the cited prior art. Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 20, 22-24, and 26-27 is respectfully requested.

Claims 30-31 have been allowed by the Examiner. Claim 25, depending from claim 20, was objected to because claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). The applicants believe that the objection of claim 25 has now been obviated because the rejection of claim 20 has been overcome by the present amendments for the reasons discussed above. Withdrawal of the objection of claim 25 is, therefore, respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, the applicants believe that the present application has been placed in condition of allowance. Early and favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application; however, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,

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